

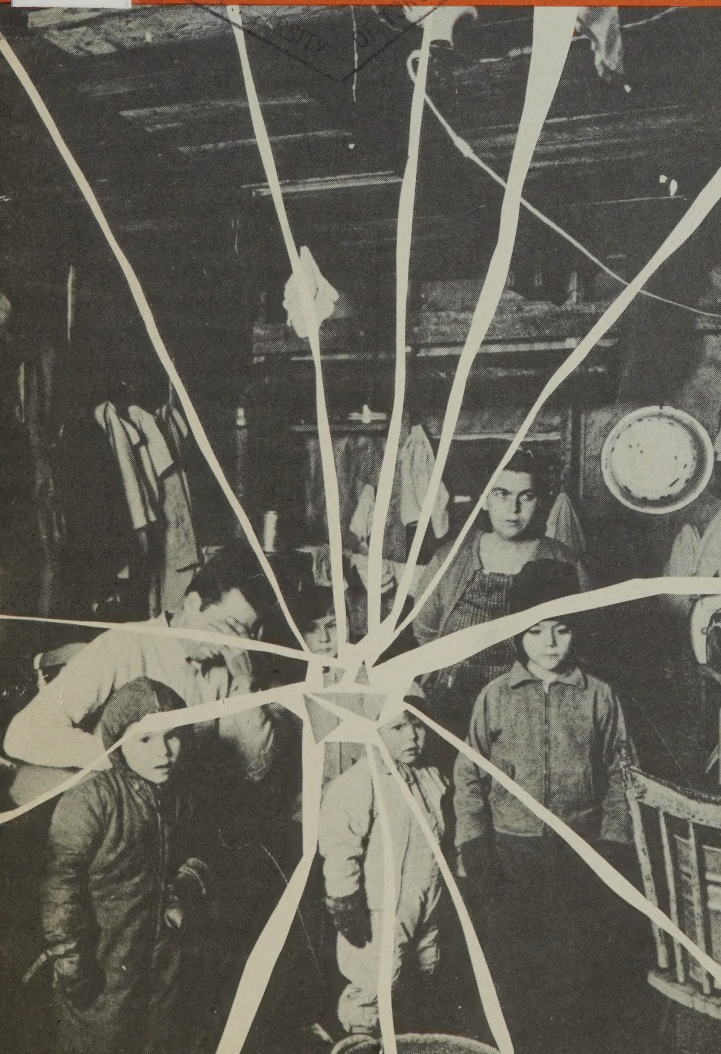
Canada... planning

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This too is Canada



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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...

*It was the season of light, it was the season of darkness,
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,
we had everything before us, we had nothing before us.*

*Charles Dickens,
A Tale of Two Cities.*



In 1965, one building in Montreal cost \$80 million; another, in Toronto cost \$60 million. In 1965, spending for public housing in Canada was about \$45 million—just under one third the cost of those two buildings.

In an average year Canadians spend:

\$500 million on travel abroad

\$1 billion on alcohol

\$400 million at the race tracks

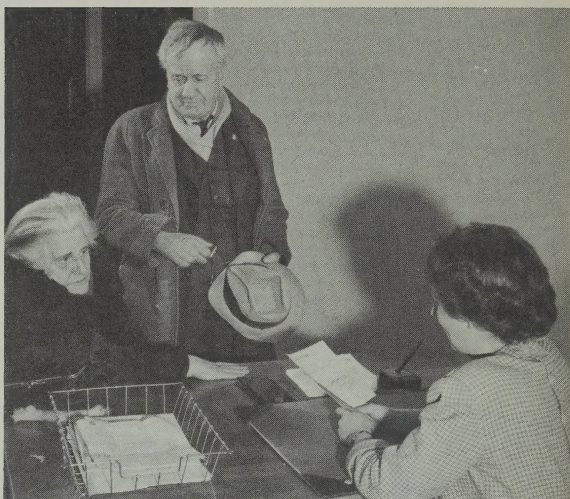
\$200 million on candy

\$30 million on dog and cat food

By international standards most people in Canada are well housed but 300,000 housing units are needed to replace substandard, unsanitary housing and to relieve overcrowding. While there were 134,000 housing starts in 1966, poorer Canadians still cannot afford to buy or rent decent housing at market prices. Publicly-assisted housing is needed. Until recently, Canada was starting such housing at the rate of 1,000 units a year. This has since stepped up to the point where, in 1966, nearly 6,000 units were started. There is still a long way to go.

Yet, if you are like most Canadians, you probably own a home or are thinking about buying one; for six out of ten Canadians do have their own homes—Canada is a very rich country.

And most persons who do own homes have a few standard things in them, things like electricity, hot and cold running water, central heating, a



bathroom. Most homes also have a telephone: Canadians are the biggest telephone talkers in the world.

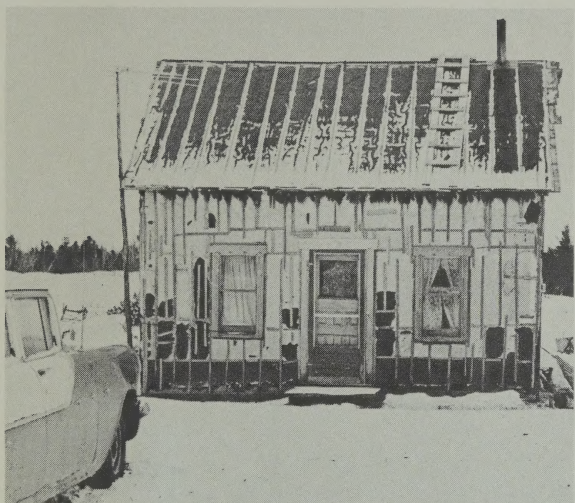
Some Canadians have very nice homes; others don't.

Take Mrs. E. Her home has a hot water heater—although it hasn't worked for three months and it *is* clean too, not "infested with cockroaches and bedbugs like the other places," where she lived.

Or look at Mrs. G. She has no heater—not even one that doesn't work. And her mailman will not deliver the mail. Small wonder—her home has been classed as unfit for habitation.

Then there's George P., his wife and three children. They have the advantage of living out in the country in a home with two bedrooms, one bathroom and nothing else of course. Calling their bathroom a bathroom is probably a little pretentious: it has no bath, no hot water, just a bucket which has to be carried out and dumped, somewhere.

Another Canadian family—a man, his wife, and their four school-age children—live in a seven-room frame house heated by a box stove, the kind of stove that gives little warmth except when it starts a fire. In their home, the water supply comes from a hand pump. The nearest toilet is just down the path; in winter it's the other side of the nearest snowbank.



This home has no electricity, no refrigerator, no washing machine, no television, no telephone—and no dishwasher. It isn't very comfortable.

Why do persons live like this? Partly income, of course. Partly because we haven't built enough decent houses for those with little money to spend on housing.

If you earn less than \$3,000 a year there is one chance in three that you will have more than one person per room in your house.

If you earn at least twice that much—\$6,000 a year—you will probably have at least as many rooms as there are family members.

Of course, if you are a Canadian Indian, there is only one chance in 11 you will have an indoor bath, one in 10 you will have sewers or a septic tank, one chance in five you will have running water.

Mathematical averages are made of many individual cases. There are working girls in Canada happily sharing a bachelor apartment. There are elderly couples feeling rather lonely in the sprawling houses where their children grew up. But there are also many, many overcrowded dwellings. The average Canadian has one and one-third rooms to himself. George P. and his family, the ones mentioned above, have less than half a room apiece.

There are some charming homes in Canada. There are also some ugly, squalid slums.

This is Canada.



Canadians are pretty well educated. Not all of us get to college but at least we can read and write and—or can we?

There are still more than one million Canadians who are to all intents and purposes illiterate. They may have spent three or four years in school and they may be able to write their names or read a "STOP" sign but they are not capable of reading this pamphlet.

In this automated age, these persons are unfit for all but the most menial jobs. They can't help their children with their homework: they can't do it themselves.

Of course, their children will be better educated than they are—for education is free, open to everyone. At least, that's the Canadian myth.

The fact is that schoolrooms for the very young in Canada are equipped with books and toys and crayons and chalk and paints. Canadian poverty studies have turned up countless homes where none of these things exist. Youngsters from these homes never see a toy until they get to school.

Youngsters from most Canadian homes learn a great deal from their parents before they start school. They learn about our folklore, our literature, perhaps even about science. They have good toys to play with. School, to them, is just a home with more children in it.

Poor kids don't find it this way. They may never



have seen a piano before the one in kindergarten. They haven't had any picture books to look at or fancy toys to play with. They are miles behind, before they begin.

To many children from Canadian city slums or backward rural areas, the classroom is a strange, frightening and disturbing place. To a child from a crowded, noisy home, even the quiet of the classroom is unfamiliar.

The child of poverty has other problems. He has no place to study. He has no one at home to help him or even prod him on. His attendance is bad because his health is bad. He feels out-of-place because his clothes are poor—children can be very self-conscious.

Of course, if he stays in school he will find that education can be extremely beneficial.

A man in Canada who has been only to elementary school can expect to earn \$130,000 between 25 and 64. If he makes it through high school, his expected earnings rise to \$200,000. If he completes university, he will earn \$350,000—nearly three times as much as the man who dropped out after grade school.

Most parents know this—and even the poor parents want their children to have a better education than they got.

The general level of education *is* rising.

But can you really expect a child of poverty who



is often hungry, cold and ill-housed to fight all the odds for some vague, future reward when he can get a job now and escape from his school, his home, from the whole damned system?

Can you really expect a poor child to go to university when the cost of a single year would take half or more than half of his family's annual income?

Of course, you can't.

Today's average income job calls for more than eight years' schooling. Yet, today, 30 per cent of young Canadians, between 14 and 24, have left school with grade 8 or less and with no thought of returning.

What will happen to them in tomorrow's automated society? Already there are not enough Canadians to fill all the skilled jobs. We have to import skilled workers from abroad to keep our economy in high gear.

Untrained Canadians today mean unemployed Canadians tomorrow. Human intelligence, energy and character are being wasted on a gigantic scale by these massive dropouts.

This, too, is Canada.

When Canadians get sick, they call their family doctor. They go to hospital, when need be. They have specialists to help them when they are required. They have at their command medical facilities of the highest order. Or some do.



Others, who get sick too, seldom get to see a doctor. He may be a hundred miles—or a hundred dollars away. Many just can never afford a dentist, or an optometrist, even if he is handy. Handicaps stay just that—handicaps. And miracle drugs only produce miracles if you use them. But first you have to have them prescribed and then be ready and able to pay the pharmacist. And we all know wonder drugs are expensive in anybody's terms.

And so it goes. Your chance of survival—let alone good health—depend in large measure on where you live and what you earn.

If you are born in Ontario, your chances of surviving your first year are fairly good: only 23.5 infants out of every 1,000 die in the first year of life in Ontario.

If you are born in Newfoundland, your chances of surviving the first year are also fair, but not as good: 37.5 infants out of every 1,000 die in the first year in Newfoundland.

What if you are a Canadian Eskimo?

In that case, you have about one-eighth the chance for survival as the young Ontarian; 193 of every 1,000 Eskimo children die in their first year of life.

Why is this rate higher for Newfoundland than it is for Ontario? Why is it so much worse still for Eskimo children?

Mostly, it's poverty.



Ontario has the highest income levels in Canada; it has the lowest infant mortality rate.

Newfoundland has the lowest income levels for a Canadian province; it has the highest infant mortality rate.

This pattern exists all the way down the line: if you know where your region stands in terms of income you also know where it stands in terms of infant mortality.

This too, is Canada.

Of course, you don't have to be an Eskimo to see that income and medical attention are related.

A federal survey found this about medical care being provided to children under age 15:

- 3 out of 10 in the low income group received care;
- more than 4 out of 10 in the middle income group received care;
- almost 5 out of 10 in the high income group received care.

If you are under 15, the more money your parents have, the more likely you will receive the medical attention you need.

Yet ill health is more common among poor Canadians. They live in conditions that encourage illness. Ill health is one of the reasons why Canadians become poor and stay that way.

A study of poor families in four Canadian cities found health problems in 50 per cent of the house-



holds and chronic physical problems in 43 per cent.

Health or ill health and poverty are very closely linked.

Studies have also shown this: poverty and sickness in childhood are definite, contributing factors to ill health in old age.

In other words, if you are poor when you are young you are likely to be sick when you are young and this means you are also likely to be sick in old age.

And sickness in old age is perhaps worst of all.

Expenses can mount at an alarming rate. A weekly visit from a nursing service can cost \$3.75. Some pills cost \$1.00 each. A 10-block ambulance ride can cost \$26. A nursing home could cost \$350 a month.

For an older person, such expenses can not only mount alarmingly, they can also destroy the peace of mind that may be needed for recovery.

The average age at death in Canada, today, is 59.7 for males and 63.1 for females.

In the Northwest Territories, where many Eskimos and Indians live, it's 26.0 for males and 21.5 for females.

This, too, is Canada.

If you are an average Canadian family—and you do not live on a farm—your family income is about \$5,500 a year.

You use a fair chunk of this money—but less than half—for food and housing.



The rest goes to items like clothing, health, education and recreation. You may even put a little aside as savings.

Of course, very few persons earn precisely the average, and it varies from city to city and province to province.

But most of us know persons who earn close to this—say, \$4,500 to \$6,500 a year—roughly \$90 to \$125 a week.

We know, no matter how well they manage, they never have much to spare. We know any appreciable cut in income will make things very difficult.

Well, for many Canadians, things are different.

The 1961 census showed that 23 per cent of Canadian families—roughly one family in four—have an annual family income of less than \$3,000 a year.

About half a million families have annual incomes below \$2,000.

This means these families have less than \$40 a week to pay the rent, feed themselves, clothe themselves and pay any other bills that might come along.

But these are only income figures: what do they mean to the people, themselves?

They mean that family income is completely tied up with the bare necessities of life. A study of families living in poverty in Canada suggests that



these families spend 70 per cent of their income on food and housing.

These persons can't plan their budgets; they have no money to plan.

These figures mean that opportunity is limited. Low income can stifle initiative.

Poverty breeds poverty.

Of course, if you are like most Canadians, you never see these people.

One third of Canadian families live in Ontario where incomes, on the average, are high. More than eight out of ten Ontario families have an income over \$3,000 a year.

About one fiftieth of Canadian families live in Newfoundland. Less than half the families in Newfoundland have an income over \$3,000 a year. There, four out of ten are under \$2,000.

This may be hard to digest.

Think of it this way: if you live in Ontario, the chances are 4 to 1 your family income is over \$3,000 a year; if you live in Newfoundland the chances are 4 to 4 your income is below this level.

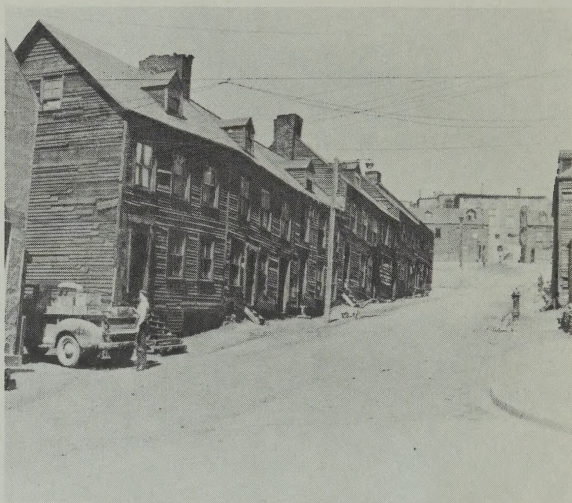
This, too, is Canada.

We have tried to isolate the various aspects of poverty—housing, education, health, income.

It really does not work.

If we draw a profile of a Canadian living in poverty, he looks like this:

- He lives in a substandard, crowded home;



- He has a poor education;
- His health is bad;
- His income is low;

And as for the stream of Canadian life—socially, economically, politically, culturally, he's not with it.

His living conditions are bad because his income is low. His education is poor, probably because he came from a poor home. His health is bad because his living conditions are bad and always have been bad. His income is low because he has poor health and a poor education.

And he, too, is a Canadian.



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